passports is an on going process. Among the measures taken to expedite processing of passport applications are : computerisation of processing procedures, provision for dispatch of passport by speed post, introduction of machine writing of passports and expediting police verification reports with the RPOs holding regular consultations with the local police authorities in their respective areas.

Modernisation of Passport Offices

†4171. SHRI GOPAL SINGH G. SOLANKI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of passport offices in the country proposed to be modernised by Government till the year 2000;

(b) the statewise details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to open new passport offices in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Government is modernising the passport offices through introduction of new measures including computerisation. Of the 28 Passport Offices, 20 have already been computerised. The remaining 8 passport offices are also to be computerised by the end of next year.

(b) A list of Passport Offices with their computerisation status is enclosed as statement. (*See* next page).

(c) The opening of Passport Offices is governed by certain criteria such as the location of existing offices, volume of applications from a particular region and the recommendation of the Standing Committee of Parliament of the Ministry of External Affairs that there should be at least 50000 applications per annum from an area where a new passport office is to be opened.

(d) At present there is no proposal under the consideration of the Government to open any new Passport Office.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

STATEMENT

List of RPOs/POs with their computerization status

Name of RPOs/POs	Status of Computerization
1. PO Hyderabad	Computerized
2. PO Vizag	Computerized
3. RPO Guwahati	to be computerized within next year
4. PO Patna	to be computerized within next year
5. RPO Chandigarh	Computerized
6. RPO Delhi	Computerized
7. PO Panaji	Computerized
8. RPO Ahmedabad	Computerized
9. PO Jammu	to be computerized within next year
10. PO Srinagar	to be computerized within next year
11. PO Bangalore	Computerized
12. RPO Cochin	Computerized
13. PO Kozhikode	Computerized
14. PO Trivandrum	Computerized
15. RPO Mumbai	Computerized

Name of RPOs/POs	Status of Computerization
16. PO Nagpur	to be computerized within next year
17. PO Pune	Computerized
18. PO Thane	to be computerized within next year
19. PO Bhopal	Computerized
20. PO Bhubneshwar	to be computerized within next year
21. PO Jallandhar	Computerized
22. RPO Jaipur	Computerized
23. RPO Chennai	Computerized
24. PO Trichirapalli	Computerized
25. PO Lucknow	Computerized
26. PO Bareilly	Computerized
27. PO Ghaziabad	to be computerized within next year
28. RPO Calcutta	Computerized